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*Islam v Čuvašii. Cheboksary, Čuvašija, 1997, 160 p.,
25 photos, biblio. [Islam in Chuvashia]*

Allen J. Frank



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- 1 Leonid Braslavskij's study is an examination of the Islamic institutions of Tatar communities inhabiting the territory of Chuvashia. In fact, the territory of the study slightly surpasses the territory of Chuvashia, as it comprises the former jurisdictions of Cheboksary and Tsivil'sk districts of Kazan province, and Buinsk district of Simbirsk province, thereby including a number of villages today located in southwestern Tatarstan. The book is based entirely on Russian sources from the provincial archives in the cities of Kazan, Simbirsk, and Cheboksary, and is a welcome addition to the growing number of studies devoted to local Islamic institutions in the Imperial and Soviet eras. This book is an especially fine addition to this literature.
- 2 The work, richly illustrated with photographs and drawings of mosques and other Islamic architecture in Chuvashia, is divided into two main sections, as well as with facsimiles of Arabic-script Turkic documents. The first is a narrative of the history of Islamic institutions from the medieval era, through the imperial Russian and Soviet eras, down to the present post-Soviet era. The sections on the Soviet and post-Soviet eras represent original and instructive material for a topic whose historiography is still embryonic, and as such supply important empirical information. The second part of the book is a history of all of the mosques and mahallas that existed in the imperial and Soviet eras, as well as of the mosques which have been founded since the collapse of the Soviet Union. This latter section will undoubtedly serve as useful material for scholars studying Russia's Islamic institutions within a broader geographic framework.

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AUTEURS

ALLEN J. FRANK

Takoma Park, Maryland (USA)